

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7873

INFO FAA BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

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FRANKFURT FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, GW

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: FOUR MONTHS OF AIR TRAFFIC

CONTROLLERS' SLOWDOWN -- NO END IN SIGHT

REF: BONN 11161

1. AFTER MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS, THE ATC SLOW-GO ACTION IN THE FRG IS STILL UNDERWAY. GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENTARY QUARTERS HAVE TIME AND AGAIN REVIEWED WAYS AND MEANS OF FINDING A SOLUTION WITHOUT GIVING IN TO THE "BLACKMAIL" OF THE CONTROLLERS BUT SO FAR THERE ARE NO FIRM INDICATIONS AS TO HOW AND WHEN THIS SITUATION WILL BE RESOLVED.

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2. IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON OCTOBER 4, PROFESSOR

TREIBEL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE GERMAN AIRPORT OPERATORS' COUNCIL (ADV) SUMMARIZED THE EFFECT AS FOLLOWS: DURING THE FIRST 120 DAYS, ALMOST 55 PERCENT OF ALL FLIGHTS IN THE FRG WERE EITHER CONCELED OR OPERATED WITH DELAYS OF MORE THAN 30 MINUTES. TRAVEL PLANS OF NEARLY 4.3 MILLION PASSENGERS WERE AFFECTED. THE 12 INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS IN THE FRG (FOR THIS PURPOSE, STATISTICS INCLUDE BERLIN/TEGEL AND TEMPELHOF) REPORTED AN AVERAGE MONTHLY LOSS IN REVENUES OF ABOUT DM 10 MILLION. THE AIRPORTS AT HANNOVER AND MUNICH HAD TO SWITCH TO A PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT BASIS. TREIBEL REPORTED FURTHER THAT A NUMBER OF AIRPORTS HAVE FILED CLAIMS FOR THESE LOSSES WITH THE FEDERAL MINISTRIES OF FINANCE AND TRANSPORT. WHETHER OR NOT AN ULTIMATE COURT DECISION SHOULD FIND THE GOVERNMENT LIABLE, THE TAX PAYER, TREIBEL POINTED OUT, WILL HAVE TO FOOT THE BILL, SINCE AIRPORT COMPANY SHARES ARE HELD BY FEDERAL, STATE AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS.

3. LUFTHANSA HAS GONE SO FAR AS TO CALL FOR THE TRANSFER OF ATC FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO A PRIVATE CORPORATION-TYPE ORGANIZATION, AND TREIBEL HIMSELF EXPRESSED FAVOR OF A SERIOUS REVIEW OF SUCH OR SIMILAR POSSIBILITIES. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY DOUBTS THIS IDEA WILL GO FAR, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF LEGAL AND CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS, BUT DUE TO ITS EFFECTS ON FRG INTEGRATION OF FRG CIVIL AND MILITARY ATC SYSTEMS.

4. ALTHOUGH THE FRG/BERLIN SERVICES OPERATED BY PAN AM AND BEA HAVE BEEN GIVEN PRIORITY HANDLING SINCE THE SLOW GO BEGAN, THERE HAVE BEEN MORE AND LONGER DELAYS IN THE LAST THREE WEEKS THAN PREVIOUSLY. EMBASSY ECON/COMMERCIAL MINISTER HAS AN APPOINTMENT NEXT WEEK WITH UNDER SECRETARY WITTRICK OF THE TRANSPORT MINISTRY TO INQUIRE ABOUT MEASURES WHICH THE FRG MAY BE PLANNING TO END THE ATC SLOWDOWN, AND TO EXPRESS EMBASSY HOPES THAT THE PRIORITY ACCORDED TO THE BERLIN SERVICES WILL BE CONTINUED AND MADE MORE EFFECTIVE IF POSSIBLE.
HILLENBRAND

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